



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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Instruction Memorandum No. AZ-2005-016  
Expires: 09/30/05

To: Field Managers, Phoenix Field Office  
Safford Field Office  
Tucson Field Office  
Yuma Field Office

From: State Director

Subject: Warning Information for Public Land Visitors in the United States-Mexico  
Border Area

**Purpose:** The purpose of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to articulate Arizona Bureau of Land Management (BLM) policy on the text and placement of warning information, including signs, for public land visitors in the Arizona-Mexico border area.

**Background:** Over the past several years, the entry of undocumented aliens (UDA) and illegal smuggling traffic in the United States-Mexico border area has increased to a point that public employees and public lands visitors may be at some increased personal safety risk.

Visitors need to be aware of current conditions so they can make informed decisions about their visit. They should be aware of the basic rules and regulations for the area they are visiting, know what they should and should not do, and know who to contact in case of an emergency. Information provided to them should be educational in nature.

**Policy/Action:** Warning signs may, at the discretion of the Field Office Manager, be placed in strategic locations where visitors may come in contact with persons involved in illegal activities, such as smuggling and undocumented border entry. Warning signs should be informative in nature and not unnecessarily overstate known risks. Examples of language that can be used on such signs are attached (Attachment 1).

As new written materials—such as access guides, maps and brochures—are developed, consideration should be given to including information regarding risks that may be present.

Signs warning of the harsh nature of the desert and the associated risks of travel may, at the discretion of the Field Office Manager, be installed on heavily used routes and other locations deemed appropriate. Signs should be bilingual (English and Spanish) and contain graphics in addition to text.

All signs must be developed in accordance with BLM Sign Manual 9130 and the Sign Guidebook. The principal objectives of signing and other types of information packets are:

1. To the extent practicable, to inform the public as to known risks by providing them information on how to recognize evidence of UDA and/or smuggling traffic and how to conduct themselves in a safe manner when they encounter such traffic.
2. To reduce risk to BLM employees by providing signing, training and other information to UDAs that explain BLM's mission and purpose for working in the field. BLM's mission and purpose are different than those of the U.S. Border Patrol.
3. To the extent practicable, to reduce risk to UDAs by providing bilingual signing that describes the hazards associated with crossing the desert and the alternatives for obtaining emergency aid.
4. To reduce impacts to our natural and cultural resources by providing information on the fragile nature of the desert and the importance of caring for desert resources.

**Time Frame:** Effective immediately.

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** None

**Contact:** For questions or further information, please contact Shela McFarlin at (520) 258-7200.

Signed by: Carl Rountree  
for Elaine Zielinski  
State Director

Authenticated by: Lucy Ontiveros  
Staff Assistant

Attachment

1. [Examples of Language](#) (1 pg)